

REMARKS

Claims 11, 13-20 and 22-26 remain pending in this application.

Rejection of Claims 11, 13-20 and 22-26 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b)

Claims 11, 13-20 and 22-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being unpatentable over Collings (US Patent #5,828,402).

The present claimed invention recites a system for selectably controlling viewing and recording of television programs. The system includes at least one viewer profile establishing a set of limits for blocking images outside said limits from view. At least one limit is selected from the group including: program ratings, spending, channel, view time limits, time of day limits, image content ratings. The present invention also provides for at least one override list including at least one override instruction applicable to the included at least one viewer profile. A conflict resolver is provided to resolve conflicts between override instructions when the override instruction are enabled. Independent claims 11, 16, 20, 24 and 25 include similar limitations directed to the conflict resolver.

The present invention is based on a "supervisor control system which permits the supervisor to enter ratings, spending, or view time limits and thereby block viewing of any program which exceeds those limits" (page 3, lines 7-8). Many supervisor control systems allow a user to "temporarily override such limits to permit specific programs to be viewed, to make a temporary change in the rating limit...and/or to temporarily revise a view time limit" (page 3, lines 9-11). The present invention allows for the input of multiple overrides. Multiple overrides will at times conflict. Therefore, there is a need for an automatic system resolve in a preset liberal or conservative manner. Thus, "when there are more than one active overrides entered in the system, this invention resolves conflicts among such overrides by following either the most restrictive or the least restrictive of the conflicting overrides, depending on either supervisor choice or system default" (page 3, lines 13-16). The supervisor choice is the

setting of the system's conflict resolver between a most restrictive and a less restrictive setting. The most restrictive setting "would deny viewing and not follow the override which would permit viewing" (page 6, lines 28-29). The least restrictive setting "would result in the system permitting viewing of a program which is within any of the override parameters" (page 6, lines 30-31).

Collings discloses a system in which a method and apparatus block the reception of television programming which meets specified criteria. The methods of Collings are extremely flexible and allow several different rating systems to be used simultaneously. The system includes a menu which "allows the features of apparatus 20 to be individually enabled or disabled. Each of the features listed beside options [1] to [6] of menu 90 can be set to ON, SLEEP (for a specified time period) or OFF...If SLEEP is selected the feature will be disabled for a period of time designated by the "Sleep Time"" (Column 17, lines 9-18). Additionally, "a user may simply disable one or more individual features from the list of menu choices" (Column 17, lines 22-23) (the menu choices being of menu 90).

Menu 90 of Figure 5B displays three options for each of the given categories available for limits. The three options are "Enabled", "Off" and "Sleep". The "Enabled" option displays the ability of the system to set limits on viewing capabilities. The "Off" and "Sleep" mode display the ability to override the limits mentioned by disabling them for a period of time or simply disabling (turning off) the limit altogether. Collings allows his system to include multiple overrides yet he does not introduce a device with which a system can automatically resolve conflicting overrides.

The Examiner contends that in the disclosure of a main menu 90 in which a user can individually enable or disable features of the apparatus Collings has met the limitations of a conflict resolver. The Examiner translates the definition of a conflict resolver to be the user being able to resolve conflicts between multiple overrides when any of the multiple overrides are simultaneously enabled. The applicant respectfully disagrees. In Collings, the enabling or disabling of an override is performed by a user in order to manually control viewing of a program or allow the preset limits to

determine whether a program should be viewed. Collings neither discloses nor suggests “resolving conflicts between said override instructions when said override instruction are enabled” as in the present claimed invention. In fact Collings does not even contemplate that conflicts between overrides may exist. The present claimed invention clearly is designed to resolve conflicts between preset overrides and thereby allow viewing of a program according to the limits set by an override determined through conflict resolution to be the most important. Main menu 90 of Collings strictly allows for the input of limits and overrides. Main menu 90 does not in any way solve conflicting overrides, rather the only method to resolve conflicting overrides is for the user to manually disable the overrides. Should a conflict exist in Collings, it would only be a lucky coincidence that it would be resolved if and only if the user happened to chose to disable the override. Should the user not independently disable the overrides, the conflict will still exist. Unlike the present claimed invention, Collings provides no means or method for detecting a conflict and is not concerned with the existence of such a conflict let alone resolving such a conflict. Therefore, Collings neither discloses nor suggests “a conflict resolver for resolving conflicts between said override instructions” as in the claimed invention let alone resolving conflicts “when said override instruction are enabled” as in the present claimed invention.

In view of the above remarks it is respectfully submitted that there is no 35 USC 112 compliant enabling disclosure in Collings showing the above discussed features. It is thus further respectfully submitted that claims 11, 16, 20, 24 and 25 are patentable over Collings. Since claims 13-15, 17-19, 22-23 and 26 are dependant on independent claims 11, 16, 20 and 25 respectfully, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are also allowable for the same reasons discussed above with respect to claim 11, 16, 20 and 25. Thus, it is further respectfully submitted that this rejection is satisfied and should be withdrawn.

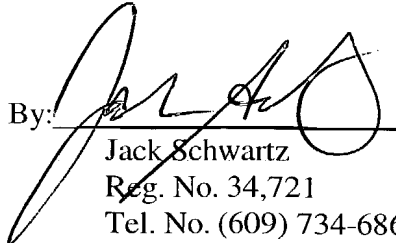
The applicant respectfully submits, in view of the above arguments, that the all arguments made by the Examiner have been addressed and this rejection should be withdrawn. Therefore, the applicant respectfully submits that the present claimed invention is patentable.

Application No. 09/475,447

Attorney Docket No. RCA 89,894

No fee is believed due. However, if a fee is due, please charge the additional fee to Deposit Account 07-0832.

Respectfully submitted,
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November 9, 2004

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Date: November 9, 2004

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